CLAIMS

1. A method, comprising:

retrieving printing device data from component memory of a replaceable component from a printing device used by a customer;

storing the printing device data in a customer database;

associating the printing device data with the customer; and

accessing the printing device data in the customer database to assist the customer with solving problems related to the printing device

2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the printing device data further comprises information that uniquely identifies the printing device.

3. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the printing device data further comprises information regarding usage of the printing device.

4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the accessing the printing device data in the customer database further comprises accessing previously stored database information related to the customer.

5. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein the previously stored database information is derived from memory of previously returned components.

6. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein the previously stored database information is derived from information submitted by the customer on a registration card.

7. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the printing device is a laser printer and the replaceable component is a toner cartridge.

8. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising associating rules to be followed when printing device data associated with a customer meets certain criteria.

9. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

testing the replaceable component for a defect;

if a defect is found, storing defect information in the customer database;

associating the defect information to one or more other customers referred to in the customer database that use a similar replaceable component; and

wherein the accessing the printing device data further comprises accessing the defect information in the customer database.

10. A system, comprising:

a recycling center to receive a used printing device replaceable component from a printing device of a customer, the printing device replaceable component including component memory integrated therewith;

a customer database that stores customer information for multiple customers, including printing devices and printing device replaceable components used by the customers;

a data transfer center wherein printing device data is retrieved from the component memory and stored in the customer database; and

a customer service center configured to receive calls from the customer and provide operator access to the customer database so that the operator can view the printing device data.

11. The system as recited in claim 10, wherein the printing device data further comprises printing device usage information that is stored by the printing device when the printing device is operating with the replaceable component installed.

12. The system as recited in claim 10, wherein the printing device data further comprises information that uniquely identifies the printing device in which the replaceable component was used.

13. The system as recited in claim 10, wherein:

the printing device data further comprises a customer identifier that uniquely identifies the customer utilizing the printing device;

the database further stores the customer identifier and associate the customer identifier with the customer information related to the customer identified by the customer identifier; and

the customer service center is further configured to display the customer information related to customer in response to input of the customer identifier.

14. The system as recited in claim 10, further comprising a quality assurance center where used printing device replaceable components are tested for defects and wherein the customer database further stores data regarding a defect detected in a defective replaceable component for each customer having customer information stored about a replaceable component similar to the defective replaceable component.

15. The system as recited in claim 10, wherein the printing device comprises a laser printer and the replaceable component comprises a toner cartridge.

16. A method for assisting customers having problems with printing devices that use replaceable components with integrated component memory, the method comprising:

compiling data retrieved from the component memory of a plurality of replaceable components into a customer database;

accessing the customer database to view compiled data that is related to a specific customer or to a printing device that is used by a specific customer to resolve a problem the customer is having with the printing device.

17. The method as recited in claim 16, further comprising storing customer information for a customer in the customer database and associating the customer information with compiled data that is related to a printing device used by the customer.

18. The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising acquiring the customer information for the customer from a registration card used to register the customer as the purchaser of the printing device used by the customer.

19. The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising associating the customer information with general data related to a printing device or printing device replaceable component used by a customer.

20. A database stored on one or more computer-readable media, the database comprising a plurality of records, each record further comprising:

a customer field that contains a value that uniquely identifies a customer;

a product field that contains a product identifier that identifies a product used by the customer;

a product information field that contains information related to the product identified in the product field;

a customer information field that contains information related to the customer identified in the customer field; and

a product usage field that contains information related to how the product identified in the product field is used by the customer identified in the customer field.

21. The database as recited in claim 20, further comprising a solutions field that contains instructions for the operator to follow when information contained in one or more other fields meets certain criteria.

22. The database as recited in claim 20, wherein the information related to the customer identified in the customer field further comprises information related to a history of communications with the customer.

23. The database as recited in claim 20, wherein the information related to the customer identified in the customer field further comprises information about other products purchased by the customer.

24. The database as recited in claim 20, wherein:

the product is a printing device that utilizes a replaceable component with component memory;

the information contained in the product usage field is obtained by retrieving printing device usage data stored in the component memory.

25. The database as recited in claim 20, wherein:

the product is a printing device replaceable component with component memory;

the information contained in the product usage field is obtained by retrieving printing device usage data stored in the component memory, the printing device usage data being stored in the component memory while the replaceable component was installed in the printing device.